

COMMUNIQUE

ON NFL DELEGATION'S VISIT TO NORTH VIET NAM

At the invitation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, a delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation led by Dr. Phung Van Cung, Vice-President of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation paid a visit to North Viet Nam from February 28, 1969 to March 20, 1969.

During its stay, the delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL was warmly received by President Ho Chi Minh; Vice-President Ton Duc Thang, President of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front; Le Duan, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party; Truong Chinh, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly; and Pham Van Dong, Premier of the DRVN. President Ho Chi Minh gave a hearty welcome to the delegation at the Presidential Palace and called on it at the Government Guest House.

The delegation had cordial contacts with various political parties and mass organizations, representatives of various nationalities, religions, workers, peasants, intellectuals, artists, journalists, aged people, young pioneers and children, and associations of southern fellow-provincials. The delegation visited the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, the Ministry of National Defence, the Hanoi Administrative Committee and many other offices, many factories,

construction sites, agricultural co-operatives, army units, and schools (especially schools reserved for students native of South Viet Nam). The delegation also toured Hanoi capital, Haiphong port-city, the Viet Bac Autonomous Region, Quang Ninh, Nam Ha, Ninh Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An (particularly Nam Lien village, native place of President Ho Chi Minh) and Quang Binh provinces and Vinh Linh area adjacent to the heroic great front. In all the places the delegation visited and all over North Viet Nam, the people expres-

sed the warmest fraternal affection for the delegation. The delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL held talks with the delegation of the DRVN Government headed by Premier Pham Van Dong and with the delegation of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front headed by Hoang Quoc Viet, member of the Presidium of the VNFF Central Committee and President of the Viet Nam Federation of Trade Unions. In an atmosphere full of kindred affection the two sides informed each other of the fighting and production of the people and

fighters in both zones, and achieved complete identity of views on the assessment of the situation and the tasks of the entire people in the present stage of the fight against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

I

History has proved that in all respects Viet Nam is one, the Vietnamese nation is one. Over the past 15 years, the U.S. imperialists have sabotaged the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam, hindered

the reunification of Viet Nam, created in South Viet Nam what they call the "Republic of Viet Nam" and a puppet administration as an instrument. Their scheme is to turn South Viet Nam into an American military base and new-type colony and prolong the partition of our country.

But the South Vietnamese people have been at the cost of innumerable sacrifices and despite countless hardships, waging a relentless and extraordinarily courageous struggle, and have foiled all

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Thua Thien province Liberation fighters open fire on the enemy

HEAVY U.S.-PUPPET LOSSES

in Western Highlands, in Coastal Provinces Northeast of Saigon and on Saigon Front

- ★ U.S. 4th Infantry Division Rear Base near Kontum Razed
- ★ 90 Million Litres of Petrol Burnt in Quy Nhon
- ★ Battle Count of Operation Dewey Canyon West of Hue : 2,900 GI and puppet casualties
- ★ Over 1,000 Enemy Troops Wiped Out and Puppet Naval HQ Pounded around Saigon
- ★ At Least 40 Enemy Bases, Airfields or Positions Attacked Daily in the Past Week

NFL Central Committee Spokesman's Statement on U.S.-Puppet "Private Talks" Bid

(Released by Gai Phong Press Agency on March 27)

U.S. President Nixon said on March 19, 1969 that "private talks" were needed to peacefully settle the Viet Nam issue. Meanwhile in Saigon, Nguyen Van Thieu also declared that he was ready to enter into "private talks" with the South Viet Nam N.F.L.

In this connection the spokesman of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation Central Committee declares the following:

1. Under the impact of its heavy failures in the war of aggression in Viet Nam and confronted with the strong opposition of public opinion in the world and of U.S. progressive opinion, the U.S. had to stop unconditionally the bombing and shelling of the entire territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and to sit down at the quadripartite conference in Paris for a political settlement of the Viet Nam question. Since February this year, U.S. satellite and puppet troops have been repeatedly attacked by the South Vietnamese people and their armed forces everywhere on the South Viet Nam battlefield, and have been suffering increasingly high losses. Yet, the U.S. remains very stubborn.

The U.S. is stepping up to a very high level of violence bombing raids, "accelerated" pacification operations against South Vietnamese villages and towns thus piling up abominable crimes against the South Vietnamese people. It has even sent U.S. Marines deep into the territory of Laos, and is threatening to extend hostilities to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The U.S. is sparing no effort to maintain and bolster up the Thieu-Ky-Huong puppet administration, using it to ruthlessly put down the Buddhist movement, and to crack down on the young and talks' directed for the removal of the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique and the setting up of a peace cabinet willing to negotiate with the N.F.L. a settlement of the South Viet Nam issue.

Although, the U.S. final defeat is left in no doubt, it is trying to cling to South Viet Nam and maintain the Thieu-Ky-Huong puppet administration, in the hope of carrying through its neo-colonialist policy in South Viet Nam, and prolonging the partition of Viet Nam.

It is with this scheme in mind that so far the representatives of the U.S. and the puppet administration at all the nine plenary sessions of the conference in Paris have evaded discussion of the key problem, which is the complete and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam. And this has been the reason why the Paris Conference

has made no progress at all.

2. President Nixon says that "private talks" are "the only way" to settle the Viet Nam issue. Though his administration claims it wants an end to the war, it cannot bring itself to withdraw unconditionally all the aggressive armies of the U.S. and its satellites from South Viet Nam. It also asserts that it respects the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, while in fact it is sticking to the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique whose replacement has been eagerly demanded by the South Vietnamese people. It speaks of its "desire for peace", but in fact it is trying to create a "position of strength" for the Saigon puppet administration to secure "permanent control" over South Viet Nam. Though repeatedly attacking the PLAF right in its den, Nguyen Van Thieu's puppet administration keeps claiming for the "disposition" of the N.F.L. The point is not to talk this way or that way, but whether or not the Nixon administration wants to put an end to its aggression against Viet Nam, whether or not it will withdraw unconditionally all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam.

The U.S.-puppets' proposal for "private talks" between the Saigon puppet administration and the N.F.L. is but a cunning move to camouflage the bellicose and odious attitude of the U.S. and to hoodwink the world's peoples and progressives in the United States now existing on an end to the war of aggression in Viet Nam by the Nixon Administration.

3. The position of the Vietnamese people has been made clear in the five points of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation Central Committee's statement to the war and the four points of the DRVN Government. It is the basis for a correct solution to the Viet Nam question, because it is consonant with the basic

principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam, the reality in Viet Nam at present, and the interests and aspirations of the American people and of the peace-loving peoples in the world. It is in line with good faith that the NFL delegation has come to Paris to help, together with the other parties, the conference achieve positive results. If the Nixon administration keeps hanging on to South Viet Nam and the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique, if it does not want to withdraw unconditionally all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, and if it does not truly respect the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, no talks in any form can lead to a settlement of the Viet Nam issue. The U.S. must bear full responsibility for all the consequences arising from its obstructing the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

Hanoi press opinion

LAIRD'S REPORT BETRAYS U.S. INTENT

On his return from South Viet Nam, U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird submitted on March 9 a report to the U.S. Senate to Armed Forces Committee. He took a dia view of U.S. and puppet capability of coping with the sweeping attacks by the South Viet Nam patriotic forces and people. Such an opinion was no surprise, since U.S.-puppet declining fighting power had long been transparent. What angered public opinion was Laird's suggestions which revealed the U.S. government's intention to continue the war.

His statement that for the U.S. "the basic problem remains that of achieving permanent South Vietnamese governmental control over the country," laid bare the Nixon administration's scheme to cling to the Saigon puppets so as to achieve neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam and perpetuate the partition of Viet Nam.

However, Laird himself could not ignore the bitter fact that the "South Viet Nam government" was falling apart, was rotten to its core and could not stand on its own feet without the protection of more than half a million U.S. expeditionary troops in South Viet Nam. For that reason, though

PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIET NAM HOLDS 10th plenary session

A sketchy balance-sheet of the past nine sessions of the Paris conference was presented by the head of the DRVN government delegation, Mr. Xuan Thuy, at its 10th plenary session, on March 27. Though it has been going on for more than two months, he said, the conference has settled no problem. On the one hand the Americans have been ceaselessly intensifying their aggressive war and on the other they have put forward proposals which betray U.S. intention to perpetuate U.S. neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. The one on "mutual withdrawal of troops," in particular, simply puts on the same footing U.S. imperialism the aggressor and the Vietnamese people who resist U.S. aggression. More recently President Nixon and other responsible officials in the United States asserted that the Paris conference

had made progress and suggested "private talks". The aim of the moves is to appease U.S. and world opinion which has been expecting from the new American administration a policy trending towards an end to the war of aggression in Viet Nam.

The head of the DRVN delegation, as well as that of the NFL delegation, Mr. Tran Bui Kiem, exposed U.S. wilepung Nguyen Van Thieu into declaring on March 25 his readiness to enter into "private talks" with the N.F.L. In the meantime he maintained his opposition to the withdrawal from South Viet Nam of U.S. and satellite troops and the formal coalition government and his demand for the dissolution of the NFL. Both the Northern and Southern envoys

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are aware that American public opinion was demanding an early withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Viet Nam. Laird said that he was not "talking about the withdrawal of American troops at the present time" and that "it may be difficult to carry out U.S. force reduction until South Vietnamese forces are capable of replacing them and thus pre-empting the reduction or withdrawal". Then he proposed a "program" for modernization of the puppet army into one capable of "suppressing insurgency".

This is in a nutshell U.S. policy regarding South Viet Nam put forth by Laird: to stick to the Saigon administration and, by its agency, to hang on to South Viet Nam. Since the puppet rule is too weak to survive by itself, the U.S. must prolong the occupation of South Viet Nam by its expeditionary army while strengthening the puppet administration and army. Not until the puppets are capable of coping with the patriotic struggle of the Vietnamese people and keeping South Viet Nam as a neo-colony of the U.S. will the latter consider withdrawing its troops.

It is thus shown that the U.S. is still unwilling to learn from its failure and is going on with its aggressive scheme.

Nhan Dan (The People)
March 23, 1969

VIET NAM COURIER

THE NORTH—GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

RIGHT at the beginning of the anti-U.S. Resistance for national salvation, educational work as a whole in North Viet Nam was given a new orientation suitable to the new situation and a long-term objective, namely, the training of cadres of the great revolutionary war.

In general education, in the 1957-1958 school year, the number of schools increased by 21 per cent and enrolments from infant classes to senior secondary classes by 50 per cent compared with 1956-1957, the school year marking U.S. war escalation in the North. Today, in North Viet Nam, each village has its own primary school, 4 out of every 5 villages boast their elementary school, and each district at least one secondary school, some even 3. Tens of thousands of complementary classes functioning in different ways by day or by night with pupils attending on a full-time or part-time basis.

And in the form of various types of schools such as "Three Responsibilities" schools for women (family production and fighting jobs), general education and technical complementary schools, etc., keep busy more than one million adults who frequent classes regularly, not including complementary schools for workers and peasants, and general education schools for workers capable of supplying in a short time complementary instruction to cadres of worker or peasant stock. At present, in socialist North Viet Nam, on an average, three inhabitants receives schooling. In some localities, such as Cam Binh village of Ha Tinh province and Mu Ca upland village of Lai Chau province, the rate is even higher, one in every two.

In higher and middle-level vocational education the number of students and pupils doubled compared with pre-war period. There are now in North Viet Nam 35 universities and colleges or annexes of higher learning establishments and more than 200 middle vocational schools; 27 schools or grass-roots establishments run classes of higher education for workers on the job, 127 other grass-roots establishments have opened vocational technical classes of the same kind for tens of thousands of students. Even in the

midst of the war, higher and vocational educational work has been developing and has become a comprehensive system of training of cadres consisting of many different branches: fundamental sciences, science and technology, economic management, pedagogy, literature and arts. The training of cadres above university level has been carried out at an increasing tempo year after year through a double channel: the sending of probationers abroad and the schooling at home.

Under the "school must be linked closely with society" and "study must go along with practice" mottoes, universities, colleges and vocational schools, by sending students and pupils to practical training, have not only raised and consolidated the quality of studies but also contributed positively to the solution of scientific and technical problems posed by production and the fighting.

In order to create favorable conditions for a rapid and balanced development of education, the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the DRVN Government have issued directives and taken important measures. In the past year, the Government Council decided to put on the government payroll all elementary school teachers. The status for government employees was also granted to all primary school teachers until then not paid by the state. Recently, the Government Council began granting scholarships to all students and pupils of higher education and vocational technical schools.

OVER the past 4 years, cultural, literary and artistic activities as a whole have been directed towards propaganda for the line and directives of resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation and for keep-up of war-time socialist work. Writers and artists throughout the North have resolutely concentrated their activities on the grass-roots, getting into first-hand experiences of the fighting, production and the people's life. With courage, initiative, creativeness and dedication to the Revolution they have maintained and raised the standards of the new culture despite the war. The cultural mass movement

DRVN WAR ACHIEVEMENTS IN EDUCATION, CULTURE AND HEALTH

In particular has been developing more vigorously and more stirring than before. With the "driven bomb explosions with songs" slogan, mass singing not only is the feature of various performances but also reaches gun-emplacement, road and transport construction sites in the busiest hours, factories and ricefields. Everywhere in the cities as well as the countryside, plays and songs composed by the masses flourish. Annual festivals have been held in most provinces and cities, at which the best works created by the masses are produced.

Health organization at villages and co-ops has already been able to provide on the spot first-aid to from 30 to 70 per cent of the wounded needing immediate attention.

100 per cent of the districts in the North possess a hospital, as against only 25

in research work on long-term complex problems. Many bases contain investigations on cancer, cardiovascular diseases and allergies or on the regimen of food, housing and rest of Vietnamese cadres, workers and peasants, and the biologic constants of the Vietnamese. Establishments for pharmaceutical research and production have succeeded in producing local medicines and pharmaceutical materials a number of drugs which can replace foreign varieties.

More than 60 millions copies of books have come out of the press. Good books dealing with political questions, science and technique, literature and arts have been published with a large circulation and distributed rapidly and have served in time extensive drives of political mobilisation, and usefully helped the fighting, production and people's life.

More than 10 libraries have been set up at district level for the broad masses and are guiding them in their reading at grass-roots level. The training and improvement of young literary and artistic forces have received the attention and a strong impetus. State-run art schools and schools for the perfecting of young writers have made efforts to closely link their instructions with the reality of production and the fighting. Some art schools are building their higher learning workers' courses have been opened at grass-roots level to guide young men and women in creation and cultural and artistic activities and have already obtained good results.

In the period under review, one of the great achievements of health service is the extension of its network which now covers the whole of North Viet Nam, from cities to countryside, from the delta to the upland regions, 98% of the villages have their first-aid stations, medical stations and living-in homes. Many of them have clinics. All co-operatives have their medical teams or workers. Many villages have at their disposal modern equipment for operations on light or minor wounds, and a chest of traditional medicines for various diseases. On an average, each village pos-

sesses 9 medical workers, many villages have each an assistant physician. A large number of them are in a position to tackle jobs of district hospitals: operations on soft parts, sutures of open thorax wounds, plastering and splinting fractures. Health organization at villages and co-ops has already been able to provide on the spot first-aid to from 30 to 70 per cent of the wounded needing immediate attention.

100 per cent of the districts in the North possess a hospital, as against only 25



Students of the Economy and Planning College (dispersed to the countryside) defending their graduation papers.

per cent before the US war of destruction, and each hospital has a large surgical personnel and many medical workers capable of treating most of war wounds.

In the conditions of war, the health service has also obtained good results in scientific-technical research and has applied them to medical and pharmaceutical work.

In 1967 alone, researches on 914 of the 1,014 subjects were completed, many of them dealing with the treatment of shock, emergency resuscitation, treatment of wounds inflicted by steel or phosphorus bombs, fractures, cases of tetanus and artery ruptures and new surgical techniques. Other works have focused on prophylaxis, prevention of epidemics, disposal of human waste, purification of drinking water, and ridding of intestinal worms, germ and chemical warfare, prevention and treatment of social diseases such as malaria, T.B., trachoma etc. Even in wartime conditions, there

Upholding the guiding principle "prevention of diseases comes first", the health service, together with other branches of activity and various localities, has actively built up a hygienic and scientific way of life, practised prophylaxis and satisfactorily seen to the people's health. Building of hygienic and prophylactic erections such as wells, bathrooms and double septic tank latrines, stables and pig-sties removed from dwelling places, promotion of a civilized way of life, such are the goals of a mass movement which is gaining in scope and depth in the North. In 1966 alone, the number of such structures set up was equal to that of the previous years put together. Thanks to good sanitation practised in a patriotic spirit amidst the resistance to U.S. aggression, no epidemics have been recorded in spite of the war and the incidence of some such as typhoid fever, poliomyelitis, diphtheria and dysentery has even decreased.

A U.S. pilotless plane was downed on March 28 over Hai Phong. Total number of U.S. aircraft lost in North Viet Nam since August 5, 1964

3,273

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perfidious manoeuvres of the U.S. and puppets, especially since the birth of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation in 1969. After failing in their "special war", the U.S. imperialists have been committing with more than half a million U.S. expeditionary troops and with the help of satellite and puppet troops an aggression against South Viet Nam. In the course of this, they used air and naval forces to bombard the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, placing the Vietnamese people in a state of war in the whole country. This was an extremely blatant violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and all international law. The entire Vietnamese nation, millions as one man, has stood up with the determination to fight and defeat the U.S. imperialist aggressors. All the Vietnamese have the right to go anywhere the enemy is to be found in their fatherland to fight him; it is their sacred right to self-defence. Since the U.S. has provoked a war and launched an aggression, it must end the war and stop the aggression. So long as there remains a foreign aggressor on our soil, our people must continue to fight and wipe him out.

The past 15 years have been 15 glorious years of fighting and also 15 years of extremely glorious victories of the heroic South Vietnamese people. Under the correct leadership of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, the South Vietnamese people have dealt telling blows at the U.S. and puppets especially in the high tide of general offensives and simultaneous uprisings started early in Spring last year, thus upsetting the strategic position of the enemy and driving them deeper and deeper into a defensive and passive position. The continual, widespread and ever stronger attacks launched by the South Viet Nam armed forces and people since February 23, 1969 prove that they have been turning to account the tremendous successes of the past year's general offensives and uprisings and that they are masters of the South Viet Nam battlefield.

The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation yields absolute political supremacy, commands unity armed and political forces, controls vast liberated areas, and is actually playing the role of a State with an ever firmer revolutionary administrative system and enjoys ever increasing prestige in the international arena. It is the genuine representative of the Vietnamese people. The birth of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces headed by Lawyer Trinh Dinh Thao has marked a new extension of the front of great national unity against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

Through their anti-U.S. resistance, for national salvation, the South Vietnamese people have not only frustrated all military and political schemes of the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam, but also made a very important contribution to the defeating of the U.S. imperialists against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and to the defence of Socialist North Viet Nam.

With their ardent patriotism and deep love for socialism, the North Vietnamese people, united as a monolithic bloc, and people in a state of war in the whole country, have been exerting the greatest efforts in both production and the fighting they inflicted truly punishing blows on the U.S. imperialists thereby defeating their war of aggression, fulfilling their task as the big rear towards the big front line and preserving the revolutionary fruits which our people and gained since the August 1945 General Insurrection.

The fact that the U.S. has unconditionally halt its bombardments on the whole territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam after piling up four years monstrous crimes against the North Vietnamese people and hindering for five months the progress of the Paris talks of extremely glorious victories of the Vietnamese people in both zones. It is also a great victory for the nationalist camp, the national liberation movement and the peace movement, a tremendous victory for the peoples the world over including the U.S. progressives.

On behalf of the South Vietnamese people, the delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation has expressed their deep gratitude to President Ho Chi Minh, the Viet Nam Worker's Party, the National Assembly and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, who have been every hour, every minute, for the past 15 years showing great solicitude for, stimulating and encouraging the South Vietnamese people's resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

II
The Vietnamese people earnestly love peace but this must be a genuine peace associated with real independence and freedom. The Vietnamese people are not prepared to accept the peace associated with the settlement of the Viet Nam problem has been opted in the four points of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the five points of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. They are the basis for a sound political solution to the Viet Nam issue, consistent with the fundamental principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam, and the present practical situation in Viet Nam.

In spite of heavy setbacks, the U.S. still tries to shrink the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, and to drag out a military and political see-saw position, maintain and consolidate the puppet administration, clinging to the latter as a tool to achieve U.S. neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam and prolong the division of Viet Nam.

While preventing the Paris Conference from reaching a sensible political solution to the Viet Nam problem, the U.S. is pursuing its criminal aggressive war in Viet Nam. It is intensifying its extremely savage aerial attacks on South Viet Nam villages and towns, thus committing more crimes against the South Vietnamese people. At the same time, the U.S. continues inflicting upon the sovereignty and threatening the security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and has on many occasions carried out blatant bombings, with B-52 in-tercontinental bombers, on many localities from Nghe An to Vinh Linh.

Besides, the U.S. has arrogantly dispatched troops to attack Laos territory in the name of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, of which it is a signatory and has repeatedly

"The South Viet Nam Armed Forces and People Will Live Up to President Ho Chi Minh's Praise"

(NFL President Nguyen Huu Tho's reply to President Ho Chi Minh's message congratulating the South Viet Nam armed forces and people on their early spring victories).

Esteemed President,

In the Spring days of Ky Dai, as the South Viet Nam armed forces and people are achieving up their spring and simultaneous attacks on hundreds of U.S. puppet targets: their major bases in cities and provincial capitals, their headquarters, airfields, ports, warehouses, logistic compounds, land routes and waterways, inflicting on the enemy severe losses in materiel and war means, frustrating its pacification programme for the regroupment of the people, extending the liberated zone, joining the U.S. "talk-peace, step up war and civilian massacres" scheme, and giving the lie to the U.S. puppet boast that "the VC has been exhausted, out of breath and soundly beaten", your message commending their early spring successes filled all the Southern people, fighters and cadres with joy and enthusiasm.

Esteemed President,

Despite their serious setbacks and great difficulties, the U.S. imperialists remain very cowardly and are still sticking to their aggressive design and have not made up their mind to withdraw their troops from South Viet Nam. They are escalating instead their aggressive war to a very high level of ferocity and inflicting in savage mass murder, terror and repression against our people in the countryside and cities. They are making desperate efforts to maintain the Thieu-Ky-Huong triumvirate, a gang of lie-hard, warlike and utterly corrupt puppets, spending up troop pressagings, strengthening the puppet army into a tool for the realization of their neo-colonialism. They have even uttered threats and slanders against our people.

However, no amount of savagery and perfidy can save off U.S. ultimate disastrous failure and its puppets' total collapse.

With the factors of victory working in their favour and united millions as one the South Viet Nam armed forces and people are resolved to constantly improve their offensive posture, firmly hold the initiative on the battlefield, strike in a still more devastating, punishing and skillful manner, deliver more deadly blows, military and political, at the U.S. puppets, win new and more considerable and sweeping successes, advance towards complete victory, and achieve their goals, namely, independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, prosperity and ultimate peaceful reunification of the country.

The entire armed forces and people of South Viet Nam pledge themselves to live up to the praise of President Ho Chi Minh, beloved leader of the entire nation, and to the trust of all our fellow-countrymen and brothers and friends in all five continents.

The U.S. imperialist aggressors will certainly meet with dismal failure!

Our people will certainly carry the day!

We wish you good health and long life!

South Viet Nam, March 18, 1969.

For the CC of South Viet Nam NFL.

President of the President:

Lawyer NGUYEN HUU THO

SINCE the night of Feb. 22, 1969, the armed forces and people of the heroic South have been mounting tremendously successful offensives on over 400 U.S. puppet positions in all theatres of operations.

Their successes are of particularly great military and political significance:

1 - Considerable losses in enemy's manpower and war materiel and serious U.S. casualties inflicted by the PLAF in a short time.

WITHIN only ten days beginning Feb. 22, 1969 the PLAF put out of action 45,000 enemy troops, shot down or destroyed on the ground 470 aircraft, wrecked 1,170 military vehicles and 200 artillery pieces, set afire over 700 fuel and ammunition storages, shelled 37 important airfields and 17 logistic areas.



An image of people's war in the Western High Plateaux

The delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL solemnly assured President Ho Chi Minh - esteemed leader of the whole nation - the National Assembly, the Government of the DRVN, and all the beloved Northern compatriots that South Viet Nam in all circumstances would remain unshakably resolved to accomplish to the fullest extent their sacred obligation, namely to drive off the U.S. aggressors, liberate the South, defend the North and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the country, and in the immediate future, to keep up their continuous attacks and uprisings, to thwart the aggressive will of the U.S. imperialists, to overthrow the Thieu-Ky-Huong puppet clique and to obtain still greater victories.

On this occasion, President Ho Chi Minh wholeheartedly commended, and expressed his boundless affection for the people and fighters of the South. He particularly praised the splendid feats of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people early this Spring.

President Ho Chi Minh, Vice-President Ton Duc Thang, the National Assembly and the Government of the DRVN and the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front have requested the NFL delegation to convey their cordial greetings to Lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho, and the members of the NFL Central Committee, to Lawyer Trinh Dinh Thao and the members of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, and to the other patriotic forces who have shouldered, together

GREAT SIGNIFICANCE OF PLAF's FRESH SUCCESS

Excerpts from an article by Chien Thang in the March 22 1969 issue of Quan Doi Nhan Dan (The People's Army)

U.S. losses were this time unusually heavy - 23,000 men, including many officers. What the U.S. is trying to do is to keep its casualty list from lengthening. Its intention is to cut down the cost of the war, while playing the people and avoiding additional political and economic difficulties at home.

The PLAF attacks however, have sent U.S. casualty figures soaring, and touched off in the United States a new wave of protest, which even draws in many Congressmen against the Nixon administration's attempt to prolong the war.

2 - U.S. "defence in depth" system rocked, and U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategy driven into serious crisis and deadlock by PLAF attacks.

THE U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategy was put into operation in February last year to provide a stronger defence to various military bases and the big cities.

This plan, however, was upset right at the beginning, by the PLAF offensive, and it was not until recently that the U.S. could complete the re-deployment of its forces and the setting up of the various defence lines. Not long ago Abrams claimed that the U.S. was now in a position to check any attack by the Vietcong.

Yet, it has become a rule that the U.S. aggressors' big talk is almost immediately and most unexpectedly followed by destructive PLAF blows.

The magnitude and widespread character of the current attacks by the PLAF, despite U.S. "preparedness" and preventive measures was much of a surprise. Yet, what surprised the U.S. most was the PLAF's ability to keep up their series of attacks and their high combat efficiency.

with the South Viet Nam NFL, the glorious national mission of fighting U.S. aggression to save the country.

The visit to North Viet Nam of the delegation of the South Viet Nam NFL, which ended in splendid success and in an atmosphere permeated with the most affectionate brotherhood between the North and the South, is vigorously inspiring the armed forces and people in both parts of the country to push up further their sacred war of resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, and bring to fruition the sacred cause of liberating the South, defending the North and ultimately achieving peaceful national reunification.

Hanoi, March 20, 1969

ERRATA

In the last issue of Viet Nam Courier, page 5, column 3 the last paragraph should read:

On March 9 and 10, American guns based South of the DMZ lobbed shells on Vinh Son village, Vinh Linh area, and U.S. aircraft bombed Vinh Ninh village, Quang Binh district, Quang Binh province.

The PLAF have breached the enemy's strong defences and violently shaken his "multi-line" defence system around the town, in Saigon and Da Nang. Where his troops were massed most densely, the enemy was most severely beaten. This called for the hurried dispatch of the 1st Air Cav. from the outer line to the middle line by the U.S. 26th Infantry Division has been heavily trounced, and most recently, by the removal of the outer line for the benefit of a new shield for Saigon.

More significantly, these PLAF onsets launched on even positions deep in enemy territory, such as the military post in Cam Ranh, showed the ineffectiveness of the U.S. "defence in depth", and brought to light many more of its weak points.

U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategy's serious crisis and deadlock can be substantiated by the following facts:

First, the PLAF's attacks have aggravated the contradiction between U.S. too great strategic ambition and its limited capacity, to such an extent that the U.S. has had to readjust its strategic plans, and

Second, the high combat efficiency and endurance of the PLAF have further weakened the U.S. puppet, not only in terms of their strength but also of their strategic position. With its forces dwindling fast and its strategic plans foiled one after another, the U.S. puppet is losing more and more of its strategic effectiveness while on the defensive. The U.S. puppets, in fact, are getting bogged deeper and deeper in their weak and losing position. They can never get back on their feet again.

3 - PLAF assaults or other telling blow at aggressive design.

THE great waves of general offensives beginning early in 1968 violently shook the aggressive design of the U.S. imperialists. As a result, the Johnson administration was forced to reconsider the entire U.S. Viet Nam policy, and take very important military and political backing down moves.

Yet, stubborn at heart, the U.S. aggressors only back down step by step and while keeping a sharp eye on the smallest change on the battlefield, they have tried to create a position of strength on the battlefield so as to speak from a position of strength at the conference table in Paris.

Now in power, Nixon is faced with the undesirable legacy bequeathed him by Johnson - a legacy of bitter bankruptcy and snowballing difficulties. Yet he continues to prolong the Viet Nam war.

NIXON thought that as a newly elected president he could have some time to examine the situation and this would do no harm to the United States, either militarily, politically or diplomatically. He moreover hoped that time would work in his favour, would help him create a position of strength on the battlefield and solidify the puppet administration and army as instrument of U.S. neo-colonialism. A new comer to the White House, Nixon was deluded by "optimistic reports" from his representatives in Saigon. He believed that the "silence" kept by US opinion was a support for him. However, the early Spring offensives launched by South Viet Nam armed forces and people upset all his calculations and confronted him with harsh facts.

THE splendid achievements of the PLAF have served the U.S. aggressors with another stern warning. The war mania must face the following facts in Viet Nam:

- The more they prolong their aggression, the higher US casualties will be.

- The more they seek a position of strength, the deeper they will sink in their position of weakness, whereas the revolutionary forces in South Viet Nam day by day gain in determination, strength and military art, and are entirely able to keep up their offensives indefinitely.

- The attempt to "democratize" the war by beefing up the puppet army is but a "crazy" one, as the Sunday Times has put it.

ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT



First time of a PLAF unit.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

R EPORTS released by *Giai Phong* Press Agency this week give prominence to PLAF successful attacks in the Western Highlands, in Central Trung Bo between Da Nang and Qui Nhon, in the 2 northernmost provinces of South Viet Nam and around Saigon. Furthermore, according to Western news agencies, in the past week, on an average some U.S.-puppet-held cities, bases, airfields or positions daily came under ground or artillery attack.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS

22 targets hit on the same night including a rear base of the First Brigade, US 14th Infantry, the HQ of the 23rd Infantry Division and the CP of Regiment 42 of the puppet army and several airfields.

T HE Tan Phu base, 7 km south of Kontum city, raided on the night of March 20, was destroyed after 45 minutes of tough fighting; one artillery company, one engineering company and one company of technicians and skilled workers destroyed, too military vehicles and three 105-mm howitzers wrecked and a big engineering workshop, a chemical works, 4 fuel dumps and many buildings at the base burnt down.

Meanwhile, the CP of puppet regiment 42 near Tan Canh, some 40 km north-northwest of Kontum also was flattened: 212 adverse casualties listed, 21 blackhounds, 12 barracks, buildings, 35 camouflages, one 105-mm howitzer and 2 military vehicles destroyed. At the Kon Ho Hing gun site, about a dozen km further south-southeast, a company of artillerymen was wiped out and 3 cannons, 2 tanks and 4 tractors blasted to pieces.

In Buon Me Thuot city, the HQ of puppet division 23 was assaulted on the night of March 20 and suffered some 10 casualties, mostly officers.

Other targets shelled on the same night on the Western Highlands included the U.S. Special Forces camp at Plei Cam, another base of the U.S. 4th Infantry Division at La Son, the billeting area for U.S. officers in Pleiku City and at Tan Tao more than 70 km further to the East, the Pleiku and Buon Me Thuot airfields, and an armoured compound at Ca Xong on Highway No 19 linking Pleiku to the sea (where 90 GPs were killed or wounded and 23 military vehicles including 5 tanks and armoured cars destroyed).

A splendid feat of arms was achieved on March 21 at Cao Dai, 6 km northwest of Buon Me Thuot: in a 30-minute battle, a 12-man section of the PLAF decimated a puppet company (more than 100 intelligence men) in a particularly fruitful ambush.

CENTRAL TRUNG BO

General attacks in Binh Dinh province where 90 million litres of petrol were burnt at Qui Nhon. Dozens of aircraft destroyed at Chu Lai and Cam Ranh airfields.

M ARCH 20 was marked by PLAF onsets against dozens of military targets in the province of Binh Dinh, such as 3 CPs of sub-sectors, the CP of puppet Regiment 41 near Phu My, the jet airfield at Go Quanh, etc... In Qui Nhon city, the patriots set on fire a huge U.S. fuel depot. Five tanks each 30 metres in diameter and 25 metres in height and 2,000 oil barrels containing altogether 90 million litres of petrol were in

a blaze for 18 hours. This was the 2nd big fuel dump fire touched off in Qui Nhon within 8 days.

Further North, in the province of Quang Ngai, 120 GIs and 7 M-113 armoured personnel carriers were put out of action at Pho An, some 40 km south-southeast of the provincial capital on March 14. A few days later, on March 18 and 19, the PLAF made night attacks on about 20 targets in the same province, including 3 district towns.

On the night of March 18, a battalion CP 8 km west of Tam Ky, capital of Quang Tin province, was written off the muster roll, while several enemy positions around Tien Phouc district town were encircled by the PLAF. At the Liet Kiem base near Que Son, a U.S. artillery company lost 100 men killed or wounded and two 105-mm howitzers destroyed. At the U.S. Chu Lai airbase, bombarded on March 20, 22 jets were destroyed or damaged. Next day, near Chu Lai, the patriots blotted out the Noi Sam base held by elements of the American Division. They blasted down the CP of the camp, the telecommunication centre, 6 cannons and 45 vehicles. A fire burnt into the following morning and hundreds of GIs were killed or wounded.

In the Da Nang sector, the enemy was hit at several places in the city itself and 4 neighbouring district towns were pounded on March 19 while an ambush on Clouds Pass between Da Nang and Hue destroyed 15 U.S. military vehicles on the same day.

In South Central Trung Bo, 15 helicopters also are reported to have been destroyed at the Dong Ho Thin airfield near Cam Ranh during a shelling on March 21.

Rach Gia Revolutionary Power

O N March 10, 1969 the Rach Gia NLF (West Nam Bo) held a provincial congress to appoint a provincial people's council, local provincial party administration and put out a program of action. In the near future the council will devote its efforts to fighting the enemy, building the liberated areas and implementing the NLF's policies.

Delegates from various districts unanimously elected an eight-member council (with one woman).

After the congress, the organizational committee called a meeting to introduce the new revolutionary body, 4,000 people from

all walks of life and nationalities gave it a rousing welcome. The liberation provincial people's council declared 'dismissal of the local provincial party administration and put out a program of action. In the near future the council will devote its efforts to fighting the enemy, building the liberated areas and implementing the NLF's policies. On this occasion, the council set free ten political prisoners who had mended their way.

TRI THIEU

Nearly 3,000 enemy troops put out of action in 50 days during Operation *Deasy Canyon* west of Mar 24. 42 others in 4 days south of the demilitarized zone at the 17th parallel.

O N March 15, the Americans had to call off Operation *Deasy Canyon* on Jan. 24 in the Co Ca Va hilly area, some 40 km west of Hue with a force of 7,000 men, mostly U.S. marines and paratroopers. In 50 days, they lost 2,900 men, mostly U.S. marines of the 9th Regiment whose CP had been destroyed on Feb. 17. A battalion CP, U.S. companies and 14 platoons experienced the same fate. They also had in this operation 49 helicopters downed, 12 of them in a single day on March 16, and 6 cannons and 4 heavy mortars destroyed.

Since March 20, another operation has been carried out by the Americans in the rugged mountains bordering on Laos, southwest of Khe Sanh. Regional troops and guerrillas of the PLAF inflicted serious losses on them. From March 20 to March 22, 220 U.S. marines and paratroopers were killed or wounded and 2 helicopters shot down.

Meanwhile, in the Hue sector the patriots on March 15 lobbed shells into Mang Ca stronghold (in the citadel of the ancient imperial city) which covers a base of puppet Division One, the CP of puppet Regiment 3 at Tu Ha and an artillery position South of Phu Bai. 5 cannons were destroyed.

In the Eastern sector of the area adjoining the 17th parallel, between Tu Lao (Rockpile) an Cao Viet port, several PLAF attacks between March 15 and 25 cost the enemy 75 casualties (including 650 GIs), 34 military vehicles destroyed, 4 helicopters burnt and 6 war vessels sunk.

SAIGON FRONT

Puppet Naval HQ, Cat Lai ammo depot and Nha Be oil tank farm heavily pounded. Heavy enemy losses in provinces destroying Saigon and in Ben Tre province.

O N the night of March 19, the PLAF pounded the puppet naval HQ in Saigon as well as the Cat Lai ammo depots and the

Nha Be oil tank farm, about 10 km respectively east and south of the city. At Nha Be, a fire raged until morning.

In Long An province, putting Saigon to the south and southwest, between March 12 and March 14, the enemy lost 350 men, among them 300 GIs, and eight 105-mm howitzers, 5 vehicles and 1 helicopter destroyed. The PLAF attacks on a base of the 3rd Brigade, U.S. 9th Infantry, the CP of the Tan An military sector and the operational CP of Binh Tinh.

Near Xuan Loc provincial capital, 60 km east-northeast of Saigon, violent attacks took place between March 14 and March 22 against units of the puppet 18th Division and puppet marines; 7 enemy companies were put out of action and 2 others died.

In Tay Ninh province, northwest of Saigon, 4 other targets were destroyed on March 17, the most remarkable being made on an armoured compound near Cao Ai where many GIs were killed or wounded and at least 21 armoured cars were destroyed. A few hours later, not far from this area, the PLAF blitzed and wiped out a U.S. Ranger company.

On March 20 and 22, the patriots put 150 puppet paratroops out of action in two engagements south west of Tay Ninh city.

I n the Mekong delta, night onslaughts were carried out on March 8 and March 15 on many points in the province, with very heavy enemy losses: more than 570 men killed, wounded, captured, 7 planes and helicopters downed, 3 tankons destroyed and 3 vessels sunk or burnt. The patriots on March 18 also wiped out a puppet civil-guard company near Vinh Long, shelled the enemy in Thanh Long city and attacked the enemy in 4 other districts of the province of Kien Giang.

On March 18, and struck at 7 different targets in Tay Ninh city.

In the Ca Mau peninsula, in the southernmost sector of the country, the Hue Lien airfield came under violent fire on the night of March 11 and lost more than 200 casualties among them all the while the PLAF pounded the base and to U.S. advisers, and 46 vehicles and 6 planes and helicopters destroyed.